



DEEPWATER NEWS

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Deepwater Takes Partnership to New Level

With contract award rapidly approaching, the Integrated Deepwater System Program is gearing for the next phase of the recapitalization effort. A key tenet to Phase 2 involves the Coast Guard's innovative relationship with the single industry System Integrator. This partnership effort was initiated to successfully produce an optimized product that will provide the best service to the American people at the minimal cost.

The very heart of the solution strategy is an integrated system that leverages technologies and interoperability between assets. This integrated system is the only approach that will capitalize on the synergy created by the systems working together for optimal operational effectiveness. The System Integrator will not only be responsible for ensuring the systems work together, but that they do so in a way that maximizes operational effectiveness while minimizing total ownership costs. Additionally, the System Integrator is the most effective way to execute a systems acquisition because:

- Total systems approach drives development of a balanced, time-phased implementation plan taking into account legacy system life and capability, cost constraints, total system performance needs.
- Common design and life cycle management practices (e.g., systems engineering, configuration management, risk management) are readily applied across product lines.
- The System Integrator assumes an appropriate level of risk and liability for systems interoperability.
- The System Integrator can enter into long-term partnering arrangements with suppliers and subcontractors (including entering into partnerships with members of opposing teams).
- Cost/schedule/performance risk for subsystem procurement and introduction is reduced.
- Asset sub-systems designed and developed by the System Integrator are more easily integrated into the system.
- New technology is more easily inserted.
- The System Integrator, in partnership with the Government, can proactively anticipate and react to changes (mission, budget, technology) impacting the entire system vs. single asset impacts.
- Organizational/staffing demands are streamlined to manage program administration.
- One contract vs. many ensures consistent application of rules, Government/Contractor expectations, and Government/Contractor interaction and decision making influence.
- Procurement lead-time is reduced through up-front establishment of total system implementation plan and associated task/delivery orders.
- Utilization of a System Integrator allows the Government to focus on its core strengths and inherently governmental responsibilities.
- A System Integrator can provide greater stability of core integration experts, as well as staffing flexibility and ability to obtain specialized expertise and apply it across all function/product/domain areas.
- Stability of System Integrator professionals provides the opportunity to carry over experience and lessons learned from one stage of acquisition to the next (concept – design – production – support).

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The Coast Guard does not view traditional “one-for-one” asset replacement as a sound or viable means for achieving the needed recapitalization of the Deepwater system. Such an approach would introduce significant risk of timely asset delivery due to the need to establish individual asset acquisition new-starts, which would require the near simultaneous establishment of multiple program acquisition offices for which key management expertise is not available. Significant analysis and mandating of asset capabilities and interfaces would be required, thereby shifting all Deepwater system performance risk to the Government. The Coast Guard would lose the system synergy, component and infrastructure commonality, and system implementation control and flexibility that are seen as key benefits of the intended Integrated Deepwater System approach.

The use of a System Integrator is not new. It is now an accepted acquisition strategy throughout the federal government. The System Integrator concept is being used to acquire the IRS Tax Modernization Program and is the proposed concept for the planned National Missile Defense System.

Partnering between the Coast Guard and the SI will bring the best each has to offer as we provide the system capability by the men and women of the Service.

Questions or Comments? Please e-mail us at deepwater@comdt.uscg.mil